

**State of Vermont
Executive Department
A Proclamation**

WHEREAS, it is difficult to categorize Stephen Stearns as a teacher, director, professional clown, mime, and actor because of his diversity of talents; and

WHEREAS, Stearns holds degrees from the London Academy of Music and Dramatic Art and the University of Washington, Seattle; and

WHEREAS, having taught theatre at Bucks County Community College, Stearns went to England for actor training, and returned to the United States to perform in Shakespeare Festivals in Oregon and Vermont; and

WHEREAS, he began his solo clown and mime career in 1977 while simultaneously creating the Horizons Project which brought professional performers into rural Vermont schools and, along with writer Peter Gould, formed *Gould & Stearns, The Clown Jewels of Vermont* in 1980 and have continued to perform since; and

WHEREAS, Gould and Stearns' original play *A Peasant of El Salvador*, has won several national awards including the Denver Global Peace and Justice Award for outstanding work in promoting justice and peace and human rights in Latin America; and

WHEREAS, Stearns's solo clown show, *Right Under Your Nose*, teaches children to transmute their handicaps into opportunities, and

WHEREAS, in 1998, Stearns founded the New England Youth Theatre in an abandoned Chinese restaurant and later moved it to an old automobile machine shop, where it has shepherded along dozens of plays over the years and trained hundreds of young actors and theater professionals, aged 3-19; and

WHEREAS, Stearns lives in Brattleboro and is rarely seen in public without a ready supply of bright red clown noses;

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Peter Shumlin, Governor, do hereby commend

STEPHEN STEARNS

for his countless contributions to the state of Vermont and congratulate
him for receipt of the 2012 Governor's Award in the Arts.



Given under my hand and the Great Seal of the State of
Vermont on this 28th day of November, A.D. 2012.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Peter Shumlin", written over a horizontal line.

Peter Shumlin
Governor